

Usage of Library Resources and Services of Central Library, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal: A User Centric Assessment

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Abstract: *The present study intended to know the usage of library resources and services by the users of Central Library, MHU, Karnal. The survey method was adopted to collect the data from the users. A total of 83 users were taken from the university including undergraduate, postgraduate, research scholars and faculty members. The study reveals that almost all users were aware of the Central Library and its services, reflecting the library strong visibility within the university. Most of the users were visited the library daily for preparing their assignments, exams, studying in a peaceful academic environment, issue and return of books, searching information for their academic and research purposes. Books were the most frequently used by the users and also access the e-resources was also very good rating. The behaviour of library staff and faculty was excellent and cooperative and helpful in nature and they were assisting all the users how to access the library resources and services. The overall positive insight of the library, the results reveals that some challenges like shortage of seating capacity, non availability of study materials, syllabus books, competitive examination books, limited study area, information searching skills, lack of knowledge of library resources and services, the study concluded that there is an urgent need to organise information literacy programme, basically how to use OPAC, and information search strategy.*

Keywords: Use, library, OPAC, e-resources, information kiosk, ONOS, Krishikosh

1. Introduction

Information plays an important role in the life of every human being. In today's environment information is spreading too fast and easily available due to the technological advancement through social media like face book, X (twitter), instagram, telegram, ChatGPT, Snapchat and many other social media or AI platforms. Today, everyone has information but it is an important that information which they have is true or false. Before, social media or AI platforms almost every human being was dependant on the libraries. But, now a day's many persons feels that there is no need of library as everything easily available on the internet just a click and in some cases, this perception is true.

But the importance of libraries still required in this digital era as huge information is available on the internet, authentic, reliable and scholarly information is not always freely available. Many important journals, academic databases, reference and information sources and reference books are available only through the subscription mode or licence based. Libraries play an important role in providing the access of all these types of paid subsection, licence-based resources and scholarly books through its portals, which may otherwise be beyond the reach of individual users. Furthermore, libraries ensure the quality, credibility, and organization of information, helping users distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources. Therefore, despite the rapid growth of Internet-based information services, libraries continue to be indispensable centers for learning, research, and knowledge dissemination

In this context Central Library, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal has taken an initiative to support the academic and research requirement of its users

by subscription of many number of e-resources and print resources. The Central Library provides the access of many e-resources, e-books, scholarly e-learning platforms, references sources that facilitate the teaching, research, and extension activities within the university and outside the university. In addition to its collection of resources, Central Library offers a variety of services by its homepage "Koha Online Catalogue". Through this portal user can be access the information like to locate the location of books, to reserve the books, to access the digital information, to access the e-journals, e-books efficiently, thereby enhancing the accessibility and utilization of information for academic growth and research excellence.

The major objective of the present study is to determine the usage of resources and services of library resources by the users of Central Library, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University. It will be very much useful to know the purpose of all library visits, useful resources and services, information searching technique, the need for training programmes, users' satisfaction levels, staff behaviour, problems faced by users, and suggestions for improving library services.

Profile Central Library, MHU, Karnal:

To promote horticulture as a productive and sustainable farming system, the Government of Haryana established the Haryana State University of Horticultural Sciences (HSUHS), now known as Maharana Pratap Horticultural University (MHU), Karnal. The University came into existence on 28 November 2016 through the Haryana State University of Horticultural Sciences Act, 2016 (Haryana Act No. 32 of 2016), with the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to establish a state-of-the-art institution dedicated to horticultural education, research, and extension. The main objective of the university is teaching, research and extension in the field of Horticulture Sciences. The

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Central Library was established in 2021 within the premises of College of Horticulture to support the teaching, research and extension activities of the university and serve as hub of knowledge. Library has established an e-resources lab equipped with computers and internet connectivity. It has thousands of printed books, hundreds of e-books along with access of many e-resources. Central Library has 380 registered users including students, faculty and staff. Library has implemented Koha Library Management software for its all housekeeping activities including, acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, serial control, learning research and Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Central Library is dedicated to provide all the modern technology enabled library services and regularly enhance its collection and facilities to support the teaching, research and extension activities in the university.

2. Review of Literature

A study conducted by Shivaraja and Padmamma on usage of competitive examination resources by aspirants in public libraries of Karnataka and found that 58.8% users were visiting the library for preparation of competitive examination in the library, 65.6% users visited the library daily and most of the users were preparing KPSC and UPSC exams, most of the users were satisfied from the library services and resources available in the library, some of them were facing problems while accessing the library like inaccurate and outdated information resources. Dhepe (2024) investigated the use of e-Resources in Libraries and observed that almost all the users were very happy for the access of all e-resources as it is available and accessible easily with the help of internet connectivity and there is no issue of physical space. Kumar (2025) studied the utilization of e-resources, user behaviour and preferences in university libraries and observed that more than 78% users were using the e-resources (e-journals, e-books, databases and institutional repositories) on regular basis 60% of them were satisfied with the library resources and services and 30% users were faced the problems of lack of digital trainings, poor internet connectivity and complex user interface. Singh et. al. (2020) examined the usage and importance of electronic journal databases by research scholars in the life sciences disciplines at Kurukshetra University and observed that 79.16% users accessed these databases on daily basis. Patil and Jawanjal (2024) studied the use of online resources at KITHM College, Nashi and observed that 40.31% users were often using the e-resources, while 36.8% were using always 14.7% rarely and 7.1% never. Talwar and Naikar (2024) studied the awareness and use of electronic resources at Karnataka University, Dharwad and observed that 97.6% users were using the Shodhganga database for their research work followed by N-List 89.2%, indiatat 84.5%, DOAJ 78.5%, Jgate 75%, and Web of Science 14.29%. The majority of the social science researchers were using e-resources for PhD research work.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the frequency of library visits.
- To understand the purpose of visit to the central library
- To identify the method of searching of information techniques

- To know the level of awareness of library subscribed e-resources
- To determine the problems while seeking Information
- To know the satisfaction level of library resources
- To suggest measures for improving library services.

3. Research Methodology

The research was based on the descriptive survey design, which is best used method for investigating user behaviour and problems occurred while using the library resources and services. This type of research is very much useful for the strengthening of the library services and infrastructure. This study also very much useful to create the users profile of different category of users like student, research scholar and faculty member and easy to understand how they are using library services and required from the library.

The purpose of this study is to know the frequency of library visits, purpose of visiting the library, awareness, satisfaction, problems faced by the users, suggestion of improvement of the library services of Central Library MHU, Karnal. For conducting of this study a well-structured online questionnaire was prepared and distributed among the users of Central Library for collecting the data from the users, *i.e.*, UG, PG, PhD and faculty members to know the above-mentioned objectives. A total of 100 responses were received from the users, however, out of 100 responses, after proper examination of the entire questionnaire it was found that only 83 users filled the online questionnaire properly and these 83 users response was used for this study for analysis of results. Tables and the straightforward percentage approach were used to show and interpret data from a random sampling.

4. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the users of Central Library, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal. In this study random sampling techniques was used to collect the data from the users including undergraduate students, postgraduate students and faculty members those who were using the central library.

5. Data Analysis

The collected data were statistically analyzed after different operations like classification, coding etc. Based on general information of the respondents, the results are interpreted as under:

Table 1: Age wise distribution of data

Age Group	Users	Percentage
18–25	64	77.1
26–30	5	6.0
31–35	4	4.8
36 and above	10	12.0
Total	83	100

The data shows in table- 1 represent the age wise distribution. The 18-25 years of age group comprise the major part (77.1%) of users, representing that the young adults was the main population of the study. Users belong to

the age group of 36 years and above reported for 12% as the second-largest age group, followed by 26-30 years age group include 6% of the users. The 31–35 years age group has the lowest (4.8%). The overall results of this table shows and suggested that the study mainly reflects the opinions and experiences of younger persons aged 18-25 years.

Table 2

Category of users	No of users	Percentage
UG Student	54	65.1
PG Student	12	14.5
Ph.D. Student	8	9.6
Faculty	9	10.8
Total	83	100

The data presented in table 2 highlight the distribution of users according to their scholarly category. The results shown in the above table that undergraduate student represent the largest ratio of the users with 54(65.1%) presenting that the study mainly represents the insight of undergraduate students, followed by 12(14.5%) users belongs to postgraduate students, while Ph.D. scholars comprised 8(9.6%) of the total sample population of the study. In addition 8(10.8%) users are belonging to faculty members of the university who are participating in the study and reflecting a comparably smaller but valuable contribution of the academic staff.

Table 3: Awareness about the Central Library, MHU

Category of users	No of users	Percentage
Yes	81	97.6
No	2	2.4
Total	83	100

The data presented in Table 3 illustrate the user's awareness about the resources and services of Central Library, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University (MHU). The results shows that a large majority of the users, 81 (97.6%), were aware of the library resources and services, indicating a very high level of awareness among the university community.

In compare, only 2 (2.4%) users reported that they were not aware of the Central Library. The overwhelming proportion of users familiar with the Central Library suggests that it has a strong presence and visibility within the university. This high level of awareness is likely to facilitate greater utilization of the library's resources and services, thereby supporting the academic, research, and information needs of its users.

Table 4: Frequency of Visit to the Central Library (Multiple Responses)

Frequency of visit	No. of users	Percentage
Daily	40	48.2
2–3 times in a week	28	33.7
Once in a Week	14	16.9
Once in a month	4	4.8
Occasionally	4	4.8

The data presented in table4 demonstrate the frequency of user visits to the Central Library. The findings indicate that daily visits were the most common, with 40 (48.2%) users reporting that they visited the library every day, followed by

28 (33.7%) who visited the library 2-3 times a week, while 14 (16.9%) users reported visiting once a week.

A relatively small proportion of users visited the library once a month and occasionally, each accounting for 4 (4.8%). The findings suggest that a substantial proportion of the users are regular users of the Central Library, reflecting its significant role in supporting academic learning, research, and information needs. The comparatively lower percentage of occasional and monthly visitors indicates that only a limited number of users use the library infrequently. As users were allowed to select more than one option, the cumulative frequency exceeds the total number of users.

Table 5: Purpose of Visit to the Central Library

Purpose of Visit	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Study in the Peaceful Academic Environment	51	61.4
To borrow/return library books	37	44.6
For Preparation of examination	30	36.1
To update subject knowledge	24	28.9
To prepare assignment	22	26.5
For research work	22	26.5
To read newspapers and magazines	16	19.3
Only consultation of library books	7	8.4

The data presented in table 5 depict the various purposes for which users visit the Central Library. Since users were permitted to select more than one option, the table represents multiple responses. The findings shows that the most common purpose of visiting the library was studying in a peaceful academic environment, reported by 51 (61.4%), followed by borrowing and returning library books, selected by 37 (44.6%), and preparation for examinations, reported by 30 (36.1%) users. Furthermore, 24 (28.9%) users visited the library to update their subject knowledge, while 22 (26.5%) users each used the library to prepare assignments and to undertake research work.

A comparatively smaller proportion of users visited the library to read newspapers and magazines 16 (19.3%) and for consultation of library books only 7 (8.4%). The overall, the findings indicate that the Central Library is primarily utilized as a conducive academic learning space, while simultaneously serving as an important centre for borrowing library materials, examination preparation, research, assignment work, and updating subject knowledge. The diversity of purposes demonstrates the library's multifaceted role in supporting the teaching, learning, and research activities of the university community.

Table 6: Library Resources Used by the Respondents (Multiple Responses)

Purpose of Visit	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Textbooks	68	81.9
E-Resources	43	51.8
Newspapers	24	28.9
Magazines	20	24.1

The data presented in table 6 show the types of library resources utilized by the respondents at the Central Library, MHU. As users were allowed to select multiple options, the table represents multiple responses. The findings indicate

that textbooks were the most extensively used library resource, with 68 (81.9%) reporting their use. This was followed by e-resources, which were utilized by 43 (51.8%) users, highlighting the growing importance of digital information resources in supporting academic and research activities. Newspapers were used by 24 (28.9%) users, while magazines were consulted by 20 (24.1%) users.

The results demonstrate that textbooks remain the primary source of information for the majority of library users, reflecting their importance in teaching and learning. At the same time, the considerable use of e-resources indicates an increasing reliance on electronic information sources for academic study and research. Comparatively lower utilization of newspapers and magazines suggests that these resources are mainly used for current awareness and general reading rather than as primary academic resources. Overall, the findings reflect the diverse information needs of the users and emphasize the Central Library's role in providing both print and electronic resources to support teaching, learning, and research.

Table 7: Document Searching Techniques

Document Searching Technique	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Assistance of library staff	57	68.7
Searching the racks personally	35	42.2
Help of friends/colleagues	21	25.3
Search by Information Kiosk/OPAC	19	22.9

The data presented in Table 7 depict the document searching techniques adopted by the users for locating information resources in the Central Library. As users were permitted to select more than one option, the table represents multiple responses. The findings reveal that the assistance of library staff was the most preferred document searching technique, reported by 57 (68.7%) users. This indicates that a majority of users rely on library professionals for locating library resources efficiently. The second most commonly adopted technique was searching the racks personally, which was reported by 35 (42.2%) users, suggesting that many users are confident in locating materials independently.

Further, 21 (25.3%) users reported seeking the help of friends or colleagues when searching for documents, while 19 (22.9%) users used the Information Kiosk/Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) to identify and locate library materials. The comparatively lower use of OPAC suggests that although electronic search facilities are available, many users continue to depend on personal assistance from library staff or manual searching methods. The overall, the findings indicate that interpersonal support, particularly from library staff, remains the dominant approach for locating library resources. The results also highlight the need to promote greater awareness and training in the effective use of OPAC and other electronic search tools to enhance users' information retrieval skills and encourage independent access to library resources.

Table 8: Awareness of Library-Subscribed E-Resources

Awareness	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	73	88.0
No	10	12.0
Total	83	100.0

The data presented in Table 8 show the users awareness of library-subscribed electronic resources available through the Central Library, MHU. The findings reveal that a substantial majority of the users, i.e., 73 (88.0%) were aware of the e-resources subscribed by the library, whereas 10 (12.0%) users reported that they were not aware of these resources.

The high level of awareness indicates that Central Library has been successful in disseminating information about its electronic resources among the university community. Such awareness is essential for promoting the effective utilization of digital information resources in teaching, learning, and research. However, the presence of a small proportion of respondents who were unaware of the library's subscribed e-resources suggests the need for continued user awareness programmes, orientation sessions, and promotional activities to ensure that all users are informed about the availability and benefits of these electronic resources. Increasing awareness among the remaining users is likely to enhance the overall utilization of the library's digital collections.

Table 9: Most useful e-resources

E-Resource	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
E-Books	46	55.4
Krishikosh	24	28.9
NIPA Question Bank	19	22.9
E-Learning Portal on Agriculture Education	19	22.9
ONOS (One Nation One Subscription)	15	18.1
Plagiarism Detection Tool	14	16.9

The data presented in table 9 illustrate the library-subscribed electronic resources that users found most useful. As respondents were permitted to select more than one option, the table represents multiple responses. The findings reveal that E-Books were the most preferred electronic resource, with 46 (55.4%) users reporting them as useful. This indicates that e-books have become an essential source of academic information for teaching, learning, and research.

Table 10: Methods Used for Searching Information through OPAC

Search Method	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Title	44	53.0
Subject	31	37.3
Author	29	34.9
Keywords	18	21.7
Publisher	11	13.3

The second most frequently utilized resource was Krishikosh, which was considered useful by 24 (28.9%) users, reflecting its importance as a digital repository of agricultural knowledge. Both the NIPA Question Bank and the E-Learning Portal on Agriculture Education were identified as useful by 19 (22.9%) users each, highlighting their significant role in examination preparation, self-learning, and academic skill development. One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) was reported as useful by 15 (18.1%) users, indicating an increasing reliance on nationally accessible scholarly resources. The Plagiarism Detection Tool was considered useful by 14 (16.9%) users, demonstrating its importance in maintaining academic integrity and supporting quality research practices. The

overall, the findings indicate that respondents make use of a wide range of library-subscribed electronic resources, with a strong preference for e-books and subject-specific digital repositories. The utilization of these resources reflects the growing dependence of students and faculty on digital information services for academic study, research, examination preparation, and scholarly communication.

Table 11: Problems faced by respondents while seeking information

Problems Faced	Frequency (n)	Percentage
No problems	25	30.1
Inadequate Seating	20	24.1
Material Unavailability	15	18.1
Syllabus Books Unavailable	15	18.1
Poor Search Skills	14	16.9
Inconvenient Library Hours	10	12.0
Disorganized Collection	10	12.0
Lack of E-resource Skills	9	10.8
Low Resource Awareness	8	9.6

The data presented in table 10 illustrate the methods adopted by users for searching information through the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) of the Central Library. As users were allowed to select multiple search methods, the table represents multiple responses. The findings reveal that searching by title was the most commonly used method, reported by 44 (53.0%) users. This was followed by searching by subject, which was preferred by 31 (37.3%) users, and searching by author, reported by 29 (34.9%) users. A comparatively smaller proportion of respondents searched using keywords (18; 21.7%), while publisher was the least frequently used search criterion, with 11 (13.3%) users. The predominance of title-based searching indicates that users generally approach the OPAC with prior knowledge of the documents they intend to locate. The considerable use of subject and author searches reflects users' efforts to retrieve information based on specific subject areas and authorship. The relatively lower use of keyword and publisher searches suggests that many respondents may not be fully utilizing the advanced search features available in the OPAC. These findings highlight the need for user education and information literacy programmes to familiarize users with different search strategies, thereby improving the effectiveness and efficiency of information retrieval through the OPAC.

Table 12: Areas where information literacy programme is required

Need of literacy	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Use of e-resources	42	50.6
Use of library resources	35	42.2
Use of Particular E-Resources	24	28.9
Use of OPAC	22	26.5
Formulating search strategies	15	18.1

The data presented in Table-12 highlight the areas in which respondents perceived the need for information literacy programmes. As respondents were permitted to select more than one option, the table represents multiple responses. The findings reveal that training on the use of e-resources was the most frequently identified requirement, reported by 42 (50.6%) users. This was followed by training on the use of library resources, indicated by 35 (42.2%) users, suggesting

that many users seek greater familiarity with the library's print and digital collections.

Training on the use of particular e-resources was considered necessary by 24 respondents (28.9%), while 22 (26.5%) users expressed the need for orientation on the effective use of the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Additionally, 15 (18.1%) users emphasized the importance of learning search strategy formulation to improve the efficiency and accuracy of information retrieval. The overall, the findings indicate a strong demand for information literacy programmes, particularly those focusing on the effective use of electronic resources and library services. Organizing regular user education programmes, hands-on workshops, and orientation sessions on OPAC searching, specialized e-resources, and search strategy development would enhance users' information literacy skills and enable them to utilize the library's resources more effectively for academic, research, and lifelong learning purposes.

Table 11: Rating of the Behaviour of Library Staff

Rating	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Excellent	40	48.2
Very Good	21	25.3
Good	21	25.3
Fair	1	1.2
Total	83	100.0

The data presented in table 1 depict the user's ratings of the behaviour of the library staff of Central Library, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University. The result reveal that 40 (48.2%) users rated the behaviour of the library staff as Excellent, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the staff's professionalism, courtesy, and willingness to assist users. An equal number of respondents, 21 (25.3%), rated the behaviour as Very Good and Good, reflecting a generally positive perception of the quality of staff services and user interaction.

Only 1 (1.2%) rated the behaviour of the library staff as Fair, while none of the respondents rated it as poor or unsatisfactory. Overall, the results indicate that the vast majority of respondents (98.8%) expressed positive opinions by rating the behaviour of the library staff as Good, Very Good, or Excellent. These findings suggest that the library staff maintain a cordial, supportive, and user-oriented approach, which contributes significantly to users' satisfaction and enhances the overall quality of library services.

6. Recommendation

Keeping in view of the analysis of results of the study the following recommendations are proposed for the overall improvement and growth of the Central Library.

- 1) **Increase Seating Capacity:** Additional reading space and seating facilities should be provided to accommodate the growing number of users, particularly during examination periods.
- 2) **Strengthen User Education Services:** Information literacy initiatives should focus on developing users' information searching skills, search strategy

formulation, evaluation of information sources, and ethical use of information.

- 3) **Improve Organization of Library Collections:** Books and other reading materials should be properly arranged, clearly labelled, and regularly maintained to facilitate easy retrieval.
- 4) **Review Library Working Hours:** The feasibility of extending library working hours during examinations and peak academic periods may be explored to better support users' study requirements.
- 5) **Promote Greater Use of OPAC and Digital Services:** The library should encourage users to utilize OPAC and other digital discovery tools through demonstrations, user guides, and instructional videos.
- 6) **Establish a Continuous User Feedback Mechanism:** Regular user satisfaction surveys and suggestion systems should be implemented to identify emerging user needs and support continuous improvement of library resources and services.
- 7) **Develop Mobile and Remote Access Services:** Strengthening remote access to subscribed e-resources and optimizing library services for mobile devices would improve accessibility and convenience for users.
- 8) **Continuous Assessment of Library Services:** Periodic evaluation of library resources, infrastructure, and services

7. Conclusion

The present study emphasizes the user's awareness, usage, purpose and satisfaction and to understand the problems faced by users of Central Library, MHU. The results of the study shows that majority of the users were aware about all the library resources and services offered by the Central Library, also indicates that majority of the users were undergraduate students and library primarily serves to the academic needs of the UG level while also catering to the postgraduate students, research scholars and faculty members.

The results of the study reveals that almost all the users were aware about all the Central Library and its resources and services. The study found that almost all respondents were aware of the Central Library and its services, reflecting the library strong visibility within the university. Most of the users were visited the library daily for preparing their assignments, exams, studying in a peaceful academic environment, issue and return of books, searching information for their academic and research purposes. Books were the most frequently used by the users and also access the e-resources was also very good rating. The behaviour of library staff and faculty was excellent and cooperative and helpful in nature and they were assisting all the users how to access the library resources and services.

The overall positive insight of the library, the results reveals that some challenges like shortage of seating capacity, non availability of study materials, syllabus books, competitive examination books, limited study area, information searching skills, lack of knowledge of library resources and services, the study concluded that there is an urgent need to organise information literacy programme, basically how to use OPAC, and information search strategy.

The Central Library, MHU plays an important role to support the teaching, extension and research activities by providing print and digital resources. Library should be continue their efforts to enrich the collection and improve the resources and services and also provide regular orientation programs to promote and maximum utilization of its resources.

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